

VZCZCXRO9128
OO RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHKH #0514/01 1041044
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 141044Z APR 09
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3536
INFO RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000514

DEPT FOR SE GRATION, S/USSES, AF A A/S CARTER, AF/E, PRM
NSC FOR MGAVIN AND HUDSON
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [EAID](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [ASEC](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: SE GRATION'S MEETING WITH MISSEIRIYA ARAB LEADERS:
GREIVANCES AND REJECTION OF ARBITRATION

REFS: A. KHARTOUM 500
[1](#)B. 08 KHARTOUM 939
[1](#)C. 08 KHARTOUM 737

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: In Khartoum on April 10, the President's Special Envoy to Sudan Scott Gration heard Misseriya grievances related to their lack of representation in CPA negotiations and the June 2008 Abyei road map and the likely Misseriya rejection of the results of the ongoing arbitration over Abyei in The Hague. They appealed to the U.S. to allow for a process whereby Misseriya and Ngok Dinka leaders on the ground work out issues between the two groups, including borders and peaceful coexistence. END SUMMARY.

MISSEIRIYA LEADERS DENY INVOLVEMENT IN ABYEI FIGHTING

[1](#)2. (SBU) On April 10, the President's Special Envoy to Sudan General Scott Gration met with Misseriya Arab leaders including Sadiq Babo Nimer (brother of the Emir of the Misseriya Ajaira), Hassan Subahi (representative of the Emir of the Misseriya Alwlad Omran), and Bashtana Mohamed Salem (the Head of the Misseriya Peace Council). The Misseriya are a major Arab nomadic tribe which migrates with their cattle through the sensitive regions of Abyei and Kordofan in search of water and grass and onward into Sudan. They fought as tribal proxies for Khartoum against the Dinka and the SPLA during much of the bloody Sudanese Civil War. SE Gration informed the Misseriya leaders that his trip was to listen and learn and he appreciated the leaders having traveled all the way from Kordofan to Khartoum to provide their perspectives. Subahi and Salem each denied any Misseriya involvement in the May 2008 fighting in Abyei and subsequent looting of the town. [Note: Continued official denial among Misseriya that the events took place is unfortunate given strong evidence to the contrary and the need for reconciliation, which will not occur unless Misseriya first acknowledge the events happened. End note.] They also rejected the notion that the Misseriya have been heavily armed by Khartoum, claiming that they only carry small arms to protect their cattle. They painted a picture of the Misseriya as victims of the situation, having had their shops burnt and looted and their lives threatened. The two leaders also reiterated their belief that the Misseriya have been the losers of the CPA, an agreement in which they were not well-represented, unlike the Ngok Dinka, who have significant influence within the SPLM and therefore have had their interests (somewhat) safeguarded.

LEADER SAYS THE MISSEIRIYA WILL REJECT HAGUE DECISION

[1](#)3. (SBU) Saddiq Babo Nimer, a member of the Umma party and brother of the Misseriya Paramount Chief, strongly denounced the 2005 CPA and 2008 Abyei Road Map, arguing that the agreements that do not consider Misseriya interests and that the Misseriya were not consulted in what was negotiations between the NCP, SPLM, and the Americans. He indicated that the Misseriya were not involved in the

negotiation of the CPA and Abyei Road Map and therefore, were not beholden to accept the arbitrations ongoing in The Hague on the Abyei borders. Nimer flatly discarded the idea of a border between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya, indicating that any such border would not be acceptable to the Misseriya. He claimed that Ngok Dinka and Misseriya leaders on the ground could easily resolve the border and peaceful coexistence issues if allowed to do so and requested that the U.S. support such a process. He said that if the arbitration goes against them, "we will fight, as it is a matter of life and death for us." SE Gration expressed his disappointment and concern that the Misseriya would reject out of hand the outcome of the arbitration even though the NCP and SPLM had agreed to the arbitration terms, encouraged the Misseriya to find peaceful ways of resolving their disputes with the Ngok Dinka, and promised to remain engaged on the issue.

COMMENT

- - - -

14. (SBU) SE Gration's meeting with the Misseriya Arab leaders provided an opportunity to hear first-hand the concerns of this key community - a community that could be a potential spoiler of peace in Abyei and along the broader North-South border. There is an unfortunate consensus among Misseriya leaders that the NCP did not look out for the Misseriya's interest when negotiating the CPA and Abyei Road Map and therefore and that the Misseriya do not recognize the Abyei Protocol and Abyei Road Map and will not accept the results of the Abyei Arbitration. We find the Misseriya arguments somewhat specious, because Misseriya leaders have had the opportunity to frequently discuss their concerns with NCP lawyers working on the Abyei arbitration and some are traveling to The Hague this week to present their positions. Nonetheless, the views expressed by these aggrieved and emotional tribal leaders do

KHARTOUM 00000514 002 OF 002

represent the broader opinion of their communities and cannot be ignored or discounted. Continued engagement with these communities (as CDA Fernandez has done over the last two years) and ongoing development projects in their areas will go a long way toward ensuring peace in the region. END COMMENT.

FERNANDEZ